

I can say without hesitation that the Reagan sisters made northwest Arkansas a better place, and for that, we are eternally grateful.

THE CONFEDERATE FLAG

(Mr. NADLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, we must not display the Confederate battle flag in any Federal park or cemetery or building. The Confederate flag represents racism, slavery, and treason, waging war against the United States, killing American soldiers.

We are told it represents the Southern heritage. It does represent part of the Southern, of the American heritage, a shameful part: the defense of slavery, of owning people body and soul, of the doctrine of racial superiority, and the practice of racial oppression.

Other countries and peoples have shameful parts of their heritages. Germany, for example, has a Nazi heritage. The Germans are properly ashamed of it. They prohibit, by law, the display of Nazi imagery. The First Amendment won't let us go that far, but we should not honor the shameful parts of our history.

As we continue the ongoing struggle to eradicate racism from American life, we must no longer honor racism and treason by allowing the Confederate flag on any Federal property.

21ST CENTURY CURES INITIATIVE

(Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, the 21st Century Cures initiative has a lot of positive measures to help medical innovation reach its full potential. I would like to focus on just one of the many reasons to support this legislation.

I had the pleasure of meeting with the family of Garrett Coyne, staunch advocates for cures for rare diseases. Garrett is a 5-year-old resident of Gilbertsville, who 10 months ago was diagnosed with a rare neurodegenerative disorder often called Batten disease. Garrett was born and developed normally, but since September the disease has left him legally blind and has greatly weakened his physical and mental abilities. Unfortunately, Batten disease presently has no treatment, no cure, and is not preventable.

While the road ahead for Garrett and his family is daunting, there is hope. It is because of provisions in the 21st Century bill that researchers will have the tools to work toward developing medical advancement for Batten disease.

By modernizing medical innovation and increasing NIH funding, a more promising future for patients, families, and innovators is in front of us. I am supporting the 21st Century Cures bill

for many reasons, but the main one is this effort to help children, like 5-year-old Garrett and other constituents in my district who are challenged daily with the struggles of a rare disease. I encourage my colleagues to join me.

THE CONFEDERATE FLAG BELONGS IN THE ASHBIN OF HISTORY

(Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to condemn House Republicans' secretive attempt in the dead of Wednesday night to permit the display of the racist Confederate flag in national parks and cemeteries.

In the wake of the Charleston murders, our Nation is moving toward the removal of the flag from public places. Later today, the State of South Carolina will remove the flag from its capitol grounds. And yet, while this is happening, the Republican majority has sought to associate itself and this body with the racist legacy of the Confederate flag.

To add insult to injury, yesterday, when House Democrats tried to bring up a resolution removing any State flag displaying the Confederate battle flag from the Capitol except in very limited circumstances, the majority turned their backs and ignored the cries of millions of Americans who are calling for its permanent ban.

Republican leadership ought to be ashamed for associating themselves with this symbol of racism, hatred, and intolerance. This body should move swiftly to relegate the Confederate flag to museums and the ashbin of history.

BASIN AND RANGE NATIONAL MONUMENT

(Mr. HARDY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HARDY. Madam Speaker, what were you doing last night at midnight? If you were like me and most Americans, you were probably asleep.

But last night, while America was sleeping, the White House was busy. The White House was busy notifying the public, literally in the dark of the night, about the President's intentions to designate more than 700,000 acres of Lincoln and Nye Counties as the Basin and Range National Monument.

Madam Speaker, at 2 p.m. this afternoon, you won't see a debate on the floor of the House, the people's House, on the Basin and Range Monument. There will be no vote for Nevada's elected representatives, but there will be a photo op to capture the exchange of political favor for one Nevadan. It will be a scene demonstrating that having friends in high places is more important than popular will of the people.

But legacy building in the twilight of one's career shouldn't be the driver for our Nation's public lands. According to press reports, it is said when asked about the heartfelt concerns of Nevadans who oppose the monument, the President responded: "I don't care. I want this done."

Madam Speaker, I do care.

LONG-TERM FUNDING WILL HELP THE NATION

(Mr. TED LIEU of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TED LIEU of California. Madam Speaker, when it comes to the highway trust fund, it feels like the movie "Groundhog Day" over and over again, where once again we are faced with the expiration of this important fund.

We know from a recent Department of Transportation report that 54 percent of our roads and highways are deemed to be poor, one in four bridges are structurally deficient, and we need to fund this highway trust fund at its full capacity, and we need to do it on a long-term basis. We can't continue to do it on a short-term basis. It is not helpful to our State and local governments. We can't get projects off the ground.

I request that the Republican majority put a bill on the floor that funds the highway trust fund on a long-term basis. And we know that this will help our Nation, because for every dollar we invest in infrastructure, we get over \$2 back in economic output.

MILITARY REDUCTIONS SEND THE WORST POSSIBLE MESSAGE TO OUR ADVERSARIES

(Mr. CARTER of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Madam Speaker, I have long opposed reductions in our military, and I continue to believe that our Nation should maintain a robust land force. The announcement to reduce the Army by 40,000 troops sends the worst possible message to our Nation's adversaries. Cuts that extend into heavy armored combat units go even further to weaken our national defense and put us at risk.

I am especially disappointed about the Army's plan to cut so heavily from Fort Hood and the State of Texas. The Army's decision to implement a roughly 9 percent reduction at the Great Place is outrageous. I have serious concerns about the logic and analysis that went into this decision to reduce so many troops from Texas.

Perhaps the most sickening part of the whole matter, however, is the damage these cuts will do to the soldiers and their families who will be asked to leave the Army after decades of sacrifice in time of war. In the coming days, I will be pressing the Army for clarification on their analysis and justification for their decisions.